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# CHINESE REPOSITORY.

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ART. I *Crisis in the opium traffic: orders from Lin high imperial commissioner for the surrender of the drug to the Chinese government: all foreigners forbidden to leave Canton; their whole trade suspended; port clearances denied to their ships at Whampoa, with a narrative of proceedings relative thereto.*

THE extraordinary growth of the traffic in opium, and its present crisis, will long remain memorable events in the annals of foreign intercourse with China. In the tariff, published near the close of the last century, opium was placed among the imports, as a medicinal drug, subject to a duty of five mace per catty. Its importation from Bengal—a plan suggested by colonel Watson, and adopted by Mr. Wheeler, vice-president in council—seldom exceeded 200 chests prior to 1767, that year it amounted to 1000, at which rate it continued a long time in the hands of the Portuguese. In 1773, the British East India Company made a small adventure. In 1781, the Bengal government freighted an armed vessel with it—the proceeds of which were to be paid into the Company's treasury in Canton. In 1794, a ship, laden exclusively with it, came to Whampoa. In 1800, it was interdicted by the Chinese government. In 1821, the traffic was driven from the port, and has since extended along the whole coast, and increased with amazing rapidity. In the summer of 1836, a high officer at court, Heu Naetse, in a memorial to the emperor, proposed its legalization, and was supported in his recommendation by the local government of Canton. In the autumn of the same year, another high officer, Choo Tsun, came forward remonstrating against

its admission, followed by Heu Kew and other. The reader will find these several documents in the former volumes of the Repository. The immediate result of them was an edict from the emperor, requiring certain foreigners to leave Canton. That edict was partially evaded, and the traffic continued through the year 1837, and until the summer of 1838—and it was said by the dealers, at that time, that the local authorities received \$75 per chest for connivance. Of the occurrences during the last twelve months, recorded in the previous numbers of this volume, it is sufficient to allude here to those of the 12th of December and the 26th of March last, the sequel of which is now to be detailed.

His excellency Lin, high commissioner from the court of Peking, arrived in this city on the 10th of March. He came with plenipotentiary powers—authorized to do whatever should seem to himself right. Born and bred in one of the maritime provinces, and having (as he says) early had intimate acquaintance with all the arts of foreigners, he was therefore, it would seem, selected for this new and difficult service. He is now about fifty-five years of age; and is described by natives (no foreigner has yet seen him) as of middling height, rather stout, and of stern demeanor. For his other qualities, as statesman, &c., his public documents and proceedings give us no unequivocal testimony. His instructions, respecting the traffic in opium, he received in person from the emperor. And report says, that the monarch—having called before him his faithful servant Lin, recounted the evils that had long afflicted his children by means of the flowing poison; and, adverting to the future, paused and wept: then, turning to the commissioner, said, “How, alas! can I die and go to the shades of my imperial father and ancestors until these direful evils are removed!” At the same time the emperor put into his hands the seal of his high commission—investing him with power (if report be true) such as has only thrice been delegated by the monarchs of the present dynasty—and then bade him *go, examine and act*. Thus charged, he came. Having made his entrance into the city, eight days were occupied with inquiries, and in preparing edicts. Late in the evening of the 18th of March, one of the foreigners (Mr. Thom) was called to Howqua’s to translate a paper to foreigners. The following appeared the next day.

No. 1.

*Edict from the imperial commissioner to foreigners of all nations.*

Lin, high imperial commissioner of the Celestial Court, a director of the Board of War, and governor of Hookwang, issues his com-



mands to the foreigners of every nation, requiring of all full acquaintance with the tenor thereof.

It is known that the foreign vessels, which come for a reciprocal trade to Kwangtung, have derived from that trade very large profits. This is evidenced by the facts,—that, whereas the vessels annually resorting hither were formerly reckoned hardly by tens, their number has of late years amounted to a hundred and several times ten; that whatever commodities they may have brought, none have failed to find a full consumption; and whatever they may have sought to purchase, never have they been unable readily to do so. Let them but ask themselves whether between heaven and earth, any place affording so advantageous a commercial mart is elsewhere to be found. It is because our great emperors, in their universal benevolence, have granted you commercial privileges, that you have been favored with these advantages. Let our ports once be closed against you, and for what profits can your several nations any longer look? Yet more,—our tea and our rhubarb,—seeing that, should you foreigners be deprived of them, you therein lose the means of preserving life—are without stint or grudge granted to you for exportation year by year beyond the seas. Favors never have been greater!

Are you grateful for these favors? You must then fear the laws, and in seeking profit for yourselves, must not do hurt to others. Why do you bring to our land the opium, which in your own lands is not made use of, by it defrauding men of their property, and causing injury to their lives? I find that with this thing you have seduced and deluded the people of China for tens of years past; and countless are the unjust hoards that you have thus acquired. Such conduct rouses indignation in every human heart, and is utterly inexcusable in the eye of celestial reason.

The prohibitions formerly enacted by the celestial court against opium were comparatively lax, and it was yet possible to smuggle the drug into the various ports. Of this the great emperor having now heard, his wrath has been fearfully aroused, nor will it rest till the evil be utterly extirpated. Whoever among the people of this inner land deal in opium, or establish houses for the smoking of it, shall be instantly visited with the extreme penalty of the laws; and it is in contemplation to render capital also the crime of smoking the drug. And you, having come into the territory of the celestial court, should pay obedience to its laws and statutes, equally with the natives of the land.

I, the high commissioner, having my home in the maritime pro-

vince of Fuhkeën, and consequently having early had intimate acquaintance with all the arts and shifts of the outer foreigners, have for this reason been honored by the great emperor with the full powers and privileges of 'a high imperial commissioner, who, having repeatedly performed meritorious services, is sent to settle the affairs of the outer frontier.'

Should I search closely into the offenses of these foreigners, in forcing for a number of years the sale of opium, they would be found already beyond the bounds of indulgence. But, reflecting that they are men from distant lands, and that they have not before been aware that the prohibition of opium is so severe, I cannot bear, in the present plain enforcement of the laws and restrictions, to cut them off without instructive monition.

I find that on board the warehousing vessels which you now have lying at anchor in the Lintin and other offings, there are stored up several times ten thousand chests of opium, which it is your purpose and desire illicitly to dispose of by sale. You do not consider, however, the present severity of the measures in operation for seizure of it at the ports. Where will you again find any that will dare to give it escort? And similar measures for the seizure of it are in operation also in every province. Where else then will you yet find opportunity of disposing of it? At the present time the dealings in opium are brought utterly to a stand, and all men are convinced that it is a nauseous poison. Why will you be at the pains then of laying it up on board your foreign store-ships, and of keeping them long anchored on the face of the open sea, not only spending to no purpose your labor and your wealth, but exposed also to unforeseen dangers from storms or from fire.

I proceed to issue my commands. When these commands reach the said foreign merchants, let them with all haste pay obedience thereto. Let them deliver up to government every particle of the opium on board their store-ships. Let it be ascertained by the hong merchants, who are the parties so delivering it up, and what number of chests is delivered up under each name, and what is the total quantity in catties and taels. Let these particulars be brought together in a clear tabular form, and be presented to government, in order that the opium may all be received in plain conformity thereto, that it may be burnt and destroyed, and that thus the evil may be entirely extirpated. There must not be the smallest atom concealed or withheld.

At the same time let these foreigners give a bond, written jointly in the foreign and Chinese languages, making a declaration of this



effect. 'That their vessels, which shall hereafter resort hither, will never again dare to bring opium with them : and that should any be brought, as soon as discovery shall be made of it, the goods shall be forfeited to government, and the parties shall suffer the extreme penalties of the law : and that such punishment will be willingly submitted to.'

I have heard that you foreigners are used to attach great importance to the word 'good-faith.' If then you will really do as I, the high commissioner, have commanded,—will deliver up every particle of the opium that is already here, and will stay altogether its future introduction,—as this will prove also that you are capable of feeling contrition for your offenses, and of entertaining a salutary dread of punishment, the past may yet be left unnoticed. I, the high commissioner, will in that case, in conjunction with the governor and lieut.-governor, address the throne, imploring the great emperor to vouchsafe extraordinary favor, and not alone to remit the punishment of your past errors, but also—as we will further request—to devise some mode of bestowing on you his imperial rewards, as an encouragement of the spirit of contrition and wholesome dread thus manifested by you. After this, you will continue to enjoy the advantages of commercial intercourse ; and, as you will not lose the character of being 'good foreigners,' and will be enabled to acquire profits and get wealth by an honest trade, will you not indeed stand in a most honorable position ?

If, however, you obstinately adhere to your folly and refuse to awake,—if you think to make up a tale covering over your illicit dealings,—or to set up as a pretext that the opium is brought by foreign seamen, and the foreign merchants have nothing to do with it,—or to pretend craftily that you will carry it back to your countries, or will throw it into the sea,—or to take occasion to go to other provinces in search of a door of consumption,—or to stifle inquiry by delivering up only one or two tenths of the whole quantity ; in any of these cases it will be evident that you retain a spirit of contumacy and disobedience, that you uphold vice and will not reform. Then, although it is the maxim of the celestial court to treat with tenderness and great mildness men from afar, yet as it cannot suffer them to indulge in scornful and contemptuous trifling with it, it will become requisite to comprehend you also in the severe course of punishment prescribed by the new law.

On this occasion, I the high commissioner, having come from the capital, have personally received the sacred commands, that wher-

ever a law exists, it is to be fully enforced. And as I have brought these full powers and privileges, enabling me to perform whatever seems to me right,—powers with which those ordinarily given, for inquiring and acting in regard to other matters, are by no means comparable,—so long as the opium traffic remains unexterminated, so long will I delay my return. I swear that I will progress with this matter from its beginning to its ending, and that not a thought of stopping halfway shall for a moment be indulged.

Furthermore, observing the present condition of the popular mind, I find so universal a spirit of indignation aroused, that, should you foreigners remain dead to a sense of contrition and amendment, and continue to make gain your sole object, there will not only be arrayed against you the martial terrors and powerful energies of our naval and military forces;—it will be but necessary to call on the able bodied of the people [the militia or posse comitatus], and these alone will be more than adequate to the placing all your lives within my power. Besides, either by the temporary stoppage of your trade, or by the permanent closing of the ports against you, what difficulty can there be in effectually cutting off your intercourse? Our central empire, comprising a territory of many thousands of miles, and possessing in rich abundance all the products of the ground, has no benefit to derive from the purchase of your foreign commodities, and you may therefore well fear, that from the moment such measures are taken, the livelihood of your several nations must come to an end. You, who have traveled so far to conduct your commercial business, how is it that you are not yet alive to the great difference between the condition of vigorous exertion and that of easy repose—the wide distance between the power of the few and the power of the many?

As to those crafty foreigners, who, residing in the foreign factories, have been in the habit of dealing in opium, I, the high commissioner, have early been provided with a list of them by name. At the same time those good foreigners who have not sold opium must also not fail to be distinguished. Such of them as will point out their depraved fellow-foreigners, will compel them to deliver up their opium, and will step forth among the foremost to give the required bonds,—these shall be regarded as the good foreigners. And I, the high commissioner, will at once for their encouragement reward them liberally. It rests with yourselves alone to choose whether you will have weal or woe, honor or disgrace.

I am now about to command the hong merchants to proceed to your factories, to instruct and admonish you. A term of three days is

prescribed for an address to be sent in reply to me. And at the same time let your duly attested and faithful bonds be given, waiting for me in conjunction with the governor and lieutenant-governor to appoint a time for the opium to be delivered up. Do not indulge in idle expectations, or seek to postpone matters, deferring to repent until its lateness render it ineffectual. A special edict.

Taoukwang, 19th year, 2d month, 4th day. (March 18th, 1839.)

(True translation.) J. ROBT. MORRISON, Chinese secretary and interpreter to the Superintendents of British Trade in China.

Along with the above, the hong merchants received, while on their knees before the commissioner, the following, addressed to themselves—several of whom, as well as a number of the linguists and compradors of the foreigners, he had previously examined.

No. 2.

*Edict from the imperial commissioner to the hong merchants.*

Lin, high commissioner, director of the Board of War, and governor of Hookwang, issues his commands to the hong merchants, requiring of them full acquaintance with the tenor thereof.

The commercial intercourse subsisting in Kwangtung between the Chinese and foreigners has continued for a period of more than three hundred years. What was there to render impossible a free commercial interchange of goods between these parties themselves? Nothing. It was then the desire of preventing an illicit intercourse, and of guarding against contraband commodities, that rendered necessary the establishment of a class of hong merchants. Respectfully searching, I find, under date the 21st year of Keäking (1816), an imperial edict,—“rendering the hong merchants responsible for the ascertainment of the question, whether or not any foreign vessel imports opium; and, in case of her so doing, for the rejection of all her cargo, for the refusal to let her trade, and for the driving of her back to her country.” Respect and obedience being paid hereto, this edict was duly recorded. And I find, that, on each occasion of a foreign vessel entering the port, the said hong merchants have always given bonds that she brought no opium with her.

In consequence of such bonds, vessels have been allowed to enter the port and break bulk, nor has any vessel ever been sent back. And even now, while the opium is pervading and filling with its poisonous influence the whole empire, the said hong merchants still continue indiscriminately to give such bonds, declaring that the ships that resort hither have brought none of it. Are they not indeed

dreaming, and snoring in their dreams! If they say that the opium which they bring is discharged beforehand and left on board the warehousing vessels at Lintin, and that the bonds given as to their bringing none, have reference to the vessels as entering the port, what is this but to 'shut the ears whilst the jingling bell is being stolen'—to provide for themselves a ground of excuse? The feelings that prompt such conduct will still less bear scrutiny. It is as if a man, to guard his house at night, should appoint a watchman, and that nevertheless his property should be bundled up and carried away, while yet the watchman should declare that there had been no thief. If this would not be regarded as combination in the theft, as what then would it be regarded?

Moreover, the foreign factories are built by the said hong merchants, and by them are rented to the foreigners as residences; the hong-men and all the working people in the factories are hired by the same merchants; and the 'macheën' (or outside shopmen) are in their employ; the neighboring shroff shops too are those with which the hong merchants have dealings. Yet for more than ten years past, there has not been a shroff shop that has not given bills, nor a 'macheën' that has not had transactions with the opium preparers, nor a hong-man or other workman that has not had connections with the fast-boats. There have been, besides, the writers' houses (or broker's shops) for preparing letters; and brokers, for carrying the orders, would pass in and out of the foreign residences, day and night, without ever being questioned by any one. The shroffs' and hong merchants' coolies; and carriers, of all grades, would in the daytime openly go into the factories, and would at night afford escort down to the boats. Can the hong merchants aver that they have heard and seen nothing of all this? Or, as they have agreed to conceal it and bring no part of it to light, will any one believe them when they assert that they have had no secret share in the matter?

I have heard, that formerly, when the foreigners came to the factories, they would go in full dress, with swords by their sides, to wait upon the several hong merchants, and would often meet with a denial, nor would they be seen or have their visits returned, until after a second visit. But of late years there have been those who will sue to the foreigners for patronage, and will even pass beyond the custom houses, or go to Macao to meet them. And so far has this proceeded, that [a party in] the 'Tungyu hong gave a sedan chair to the chief supercargo Baynes, whereupon the same chief supercargo turned round, and would not suffer the hong merchants to enter his factory



in chairs. Many have been the instances of this misconduct and subversion of what is right and fitting. What sense of shame indeed does there yet remain? Though it be true that this has arisen from the conduct of probationary hong merchants, who have shown the example of such artful demeanor, and that the original merchants, men of property and family, would never have descended to this stage of degradation; yet all now are equally involved in the stench of it, and truly I burn with shame for you. With you there seems to be no other consideration than that of growing rich, and being left to carry on your trade; and you seem to regard the mine of all your profits as lying in the attaching of foreigners to you. You leave no room for the consideration that the profits enjoyed by foreigners are those granted by the celestial court; and that if some day they should irritate the sacred wrath to the cutting off of their trade and closing of the custom-houses, not a mite of profit will there be for any of those nations to look for: and what then will there be for you?

They, regardless of the rich favors wherewith they are imbued by the court, take depraved natives for their bosom friends. In the public offices of the inner land, there is not a movement or a pause, but the foreigners are fully informed of it. But if any question is put to the hong merchants regarding foreign affairs, they turn about for ways in which to gloss over and conceal the facts, nor will they utter the truth. Thus it is in regard to the exportation of the pure silver beyond sea, a thing so very strictly prohibited. Did the foreigners really barter goods for goods? But more than this, the hong merchants once represented, that each year, in addition to the interchange of commodities by barter, the foreigners require always to bring into the inner land foreign money to the amount of four or five millions of dollars. Were this really the case, how comes it that of late years the foreign ships have brought into the port no new foreign money, and that the foreign silver existing in the country has daily been diminishing in quantity? And how happens it, that among the hong merchants there have been bankrupts whose debts to foreigners have exceeded a million of money? It is clear that these four words, 'goods bartered for goods,' are totally and altogether false.

There is one thing yet more extraordinary. These hong merchants, sheltering themselves under a memorial of a former superintendent of customs, Ah, who requested temporarily as a trial, that three tenths of any surplus foreign money should be allowed to be taken away,—have acted as though this request had passed into an established law, and have yearly, under cover of this, solicited per-

mission to embark money. They have had numerous boxes made, such as are employed for the remittance of revenue. And they have even represented for the foreigners, that, in such a year, a foreigner left so much money in such and such hands, and that now he has intrusted such and such a person to convey it home for him; and they have secretly concerted with the clerks of the custom-house to put this upon the records. Thus, while on the one hand the hong merchants give these bonds, the silver, on the other hand, is exported,—their words and deeds are contrary one to another, and this is passed quietly over without exciting surprise. And when the imperial pleasure has been expressed, that inquiry should be made, they have with one simple address glossed over and set at rest the whole matter.

With regard too to foreigners, such as Jardine and others, who have been in the habit of selling opium — all of them artful and crafty men — when the imperial pleasure was expressed, two years ago, that their conduct should be inquired into, and that they should be driven forth, the said hong merchants still strenuously defended them. Such language as this was used: ‘that when it could be discovered that there had been any concert in selling opium, any money taken, or orders given, punishment would then be willingly submitted to.’ Such a bond is yet to be found among the archives! Let them ask themselves, whether, according to this bond, punishment should, or should not, be inflicted? Again, the opium on board Innes’ vessel was seized within the river, showing that the bonds given even for vessels that have entered the port have been no less unworthy of confidence.

Last winter, seven passage boats, on the reiterated representations of these merchants, newly received permission to run, and already smuggling of goods, and importation of gunpowder, have been the consequence. If you say these things were without your knowledge, of what use then are you? If they took place with your knowledge, death is too light a punishment for you.

It is computed that the loss of the silver of China, during a period of several years past, by exportation beyond sea, has been not less than some hundreds of millions. The imperial commands have been repeatedly received in reference to the importation of opium and exportation of pure silver, reproving all the officers of every degree in the most severe terms, yet these hong merchants have continued in the same course of filthy and disgraceful conduct, to the great indignation and gnashing of teeth of every one. I, the high commissioner, in obeying the imperial commands, in accordance with which I have



come to Canton, shall first punish the depraved natives. And it is by no means certain that these hong merchants will not be within the number.

I proceed to command that investigation be made. Upon my commands reaching the said hong merchants, let them immediately state clearly the truth, that matters may be thoroughly arranged in compliance with the laws. The utter annihilation of the opium trade being now my first object, I have given commands to the foreigners, to deliver up to government all the myriads of chests of opium which they have on board their warehousing vessels. And I have also called on them to subscribe a bond, in Chinese and in the foreign languages jointly, declaring that henceforth they will never venture to bring opium, and that if any should again be brought, upon discovery thereof, the parties concerned shall immediately suffer execution of the laws, and the property shall be confiscated to government. These commands are now given to the hong merchants, that they may convey them to the foreign factories and plainly make them known. It is requisite that they should acquire an earnest severity of deportment, that the energetic character of the commands may be clearly made to appear. They must not continue to exhibit a contumacious disposition or to color over the matter, nor may they again give utterance to any expressions of solicitation. It is imperative on them, to act with energy and loftiness of tone, and to unite in enjoining these commands. Three days are prescribed, within which they must obtain the required bonds, and report in reply hereto. If it be found that this matter cannot at once be arranged by them, it will be apparent, without inquiry, that they are constantly acting in concert with depraved foreigners, and that their minds have a perverted inclination. And I, the high commissioner, will forthwith solicit the royal death-warrant, and select for execution one or two of the most unworthy of their number, confiscating their property to government, and thus will I show a lucid warning. Say not that you did not receive timely notice. A special edict.

Taoukwang, 19th year, 2d month, 4th day. (March 18th, 1839.)

(True translation.) J. ROBT. MORRISON, Chinese secretary and interpreter to the Superintendents of British Trade in China.

Much excitement was produced by these two papers; and it was increased by the early appearance of another one, detaining foreigners in Canton.

## No. 3.

To Mr. Wetmore and the other gentlemen of the honorable Chamber of Commerce. A respectful communication.

We beg to call your attention to the enclosed copy of an edict we have just received from his excellency the hoppo, commanding that, during the present state of affairs, no foreigners be permitted to apply for leave to go down to Macao. Please circulate this among the residents that all knowing, may obey. It is for this we write, and with compliments remain.

## THE HONG MERCHANTS.

Yu, hoppo, &c., &c., issues this edict to the hong merchants for their full information.

Pending the stay of the commissioner in Canton, and while the consequences of his investigations, both to foreigners and natives, are yet uncertain, all foreign residents are forbidden to go down to Macao. I therefore issue this edict to the hong merchants. On receipt of it let them instantly communicate to the foreigners its purport for their information and obedience. For the present they must not petition for leave to go down to Macao. Do not oppose. A special edict. March 19th, 1839.

(True translation.) S. FEARON, Chinese interpreter to the General Chamber of Commerce.

Just at this juncture, one of the recently licensed passage-boats, the *Snipe*, was stopped at the Bogue, on account of her having on board "one twenty-five catty box of tea, four ten catty boxes, and three five catty boxes; four tubs of sugar, one bag of sugar, one box of sugar candy, one box of clothes, with one bag and two boxes containing letters, all embarked under the inspection of the officers of the customs stationed at the point in front of the factories, and who received the sum of \$ . . . being the amount of duties assessed by them on said articles; after which they gave her a passport to proceed to Macao." She was immediately brought back, the goods confiscated, and the boat consigned by the hoppo's decree to destruction. She has since been broken up.

Thursday, 21st of March, came with unusual interest, as with it the period of three days, allotted by the commissioner for surrendering the opium, was to terminate. At 10 o'clock A. M., the General Chamber of Commerce was convened, and fully attended. After long and animated discussions, the meeting closed by voting a letter to the hong merchants, which was couched in the following words :

## No. 4.

Canton, March 21st, 1839.

General Chamber of Commerce.

To the hong merchants; Gentlemen,

We beg to acknowledge the receipt of the proclamation issued to all foreigners by the imperial commissioner. It has been received with profound respect by this Chamber, and they have had a meeting this morning of its members, who have directed me, as their chairman, to report to you as follows, viz.

“That the communications made, by the commissioner, of the imperial will are of such vital importance, and involve such complicated interests, that a reply to them cannot be given without the greatest deliberation, and that a committee should now therefore be appointed to take the measures into consideration, and report their opinions to the Chamber at the earliest possible period. That in the meantime, a deputation from this meeting do wait upon the hong merchants to state to them what has been done, who may at the same time state, that there is an almost unanimous feeling in the community of the absolute necessity of the foreign residents of Canton having no connexion with the opium traffic.” It affords me great satisfaction to be able to inform you that, agreeably to this resolution of the Chamber, a committee has been appointed, who will report in time, to enable a definite reply to be given on or before Wednesday next, the 27th instant; and I need not assure you how very anxious the Chamber are, that this important question should be disposed of, and your minds as well as those of all right thinking people be set at ease. I have the honor to be gentlemen, Your most obedient, &c.

W. S. WETMORE,—Chairman.

This letter was conveyed by a deputation to the hong merchants, who immediately carried the same to the high commissioner. Affairs now began to assume a still more serious aspect. All commercial business was stopped. Intercourse, even with the shipping at Whampoa, was cut off; boats that had come to the city, not being allowed to return. Meantime troops were collected in the suburbs, and cruisers carrying armed men assembled on the river in front of the factories. At length the hong merchants returned from the city, and about 10 o'clock at night, an extraordinary meeting of the General Chamber of Commerce was hastily summoned. The chairman informed the gentlemen present that they been assembled by special request of the hong merchants, who shortly after came in, and being asked, what took place during their interview with the commissioner,

answered, "We took the words of your letter to him, and he gave them to the prefect to examine; on hearing them read, he said you (foreigners) were trifling with us, but you should not do so with him. He declared that if opium was not delivered up, he should be at the consoo house to-morrow at 10 o'clock, and then he would show what he would do." The hong merchants declared that, unless *some* opium was given up, they felt assured two of their number would be beheaded in the morning! Finally, it was agreed that 1037 chests should be surrendered to the government to be destroyed. This amount was, we understand, tendered by individuals, and not by the Chamber.

With this proffer from the foreigners, the hong merchants, early on the morning of the 22d, went into the city, where they saw only the governor, who assured them the quantity was by no means sufficient. Consequently demands for an additional quantity were made; and in the afternoon of this day, an invitation, purporting to be from the commissioner, was sent for Mr. Dent, to go to the city-gates to meet his excellency. As a willingness to go was expressed, on condition the commissioner would furnish him with a safe conduct under his own seal, guarantying his return within twenty-four hours, the hong merchants urged compliance, on consideration that a refusal would place their lives in imminent danger. It was afterwards urged that he should go into the city. Moreover, it was rumored, and subsequently found to be true, that the commissioner had taken measures to procure the services of two cooks, who had long been employed by foreigners, and the inference from this, of his intention to detain this gentleman as a hostage, was not a forced one.

The report of proceedings here, having reached Macao, called forth the following paper:

No. 5.

*Circular to Her Britannic Majesty's Subjects.*

The chief superintendent of the trade of British subjects in China, having received information that her majesty's subjects are detained against their will in Canton; and having other urgent reasons for the withdrawal of all confidence in the just and moderate dispositions of the provincial government, has now to require that all the ships of her majesty's subjects at the outer anchorages should proceed forthwith to Hongkong, and hoisting their national colors be prepared to resist every act of aggression upon the part of the Chinese government. In the absence of captain Blake of H. M.'s sloop Larne, captain Parry of the *Hercules* will make the necessary dispositions



for putting the ships in a posture of defense; and in the absence of captain Parry, that duty will devolve on captain Wallace of the *Mermaid*. And the chief superintendent, in her majesty's name, requires all British subjects, to whom these presents may come, to respect the authority of the persons herein charged with the duty of providing for the protection of British life and property.

Given under my hand and seal of office, at Macao, this twenty-second day of March, one thousand eight hundred and thirty-nine.

(Signed) CHARLES ELLIOT, Chief Superintendent of the trade of British subjects in China.

The following, as postscript to the preceding, should be inserted here, being of the same date, written on board—

Her majesty's sloop *Larne*, at anchor in Macao Roads, March 22d, 1839.

With reference to my circular of this day's date it is desirable that the ships of her majesty's subjects at the outer anchorages should proceed forthwith to Hongkong, placing themselves in the absence of captain Blake of her majesty's sloop *Larne*, under the guidance of captain Parry of the *Hercules*, and in the absence of captain Parry, under the guidance of captain Wallace of the *Mermaid*.

Commanders of British ships will make every preparation to resist aggression upon the part of the Chinese government, but they will be very careful to refrain from provoking attack.

(Signed) CHARLES ELLIOT, Chief Superintendent of the trade of British subjects in China.

Saturday morning, March 23d, the prefect of Canton, and other local magistrates, with a deputy from the commissioner, proceeded at an early hour to the consoo-house, or public hall of the hong merchants by whom they were there attended, Howqua and Mowqua having chains around their necks, and all of them deprived of their official buttons. Soon the hong merchants were seen hastening to Mr. Dent's house; and from thence, after a short stay, to the Chamber of Commerce, again assembled at their request. Howqua represented, that the refusal of Mr. Dent yesterday, had already subjected them to the loss of their buttons, and the degradation of wearing chains, that unless he should in the course of that day appear before the commissioner, two of their own number would be put to death. After an animated debate, without effecting their end, the hong merchants returned to the house of Mr. D., accompanied by members of the Chamber and several other residents. The debate was there renewed, and a unanimous opinion expressed, on the part of foreigners,

supporting Mr. Dent in his determination not to go voluntarily into the city, except on the conditions already expressed. There being little prospect of his being persuaded by the hong merchants to leave his house, two officers from the consoo now came in, declaring that their orders were imperative to bring him before the commissioner. In reply they were told, that he had the most profound respect for the commissioner and his high office, and felt most particularly grateful to the officers present for the kindness and consideration evinced in coming to his house, and for the polite manner in which they had delivered their orders; but that he should not go into the city without the commissioner's own safe conduct, unless taken out of the house by force, in which case no resistance would be made. The officers declared they would never leave the house, unless he went with them, protesting at the same time that no evil should befall him, and that he should be safely conducted back the same evening. At this stage of the discussion, much solicitude was felt; and every one seemed anxious to know how the question would be settled. It was proposed finally that one of Mr. Dent's partners should go to the consoo-house, and state to the officers there the refusal already expressed to go into the city. This was agreed to; and at the consoo-house it was further agreed that four of the foreigners—Messrs. Inglis, Slade, Thom, and Fearon—should go into the city to report the same refusal to the officers there. In a few minutes the gentlemen found themselves within the walls of the city, in one of the temples where they were, after a little delay, separately called before the high provincial officers, and asked their names, country, the reason why Mr. Dent did not come with them, &c. The officers were told in reply, “that all the foreigners thought he would be detained, and therefore they would not allow him to come.” One of the officers then said that the high commissioner, having positive orders to suppress the traffic in opium, wished to see and admonish Mr. Dent, and that if he did not consent to come, he should be dragged out of his house by force. After a detention of two or three hours, the four gentlemen were conducted safely back to their factories, at about nine o'clock P. M., with some trifling presents of silk and wine, to the gentlemen who acted as interpreters for the parties. The imprisonment of Mr. Flint some years ago, and other similar acts on the part of the Chinese government, were the chief reasons which prevented compliance with the demand of the Chinese authorities, without first obtaining a safe conduct under the seal of the commissioner—for the time being the only irresponsible officer in Canton.



At midnight the hong merchants were again at Mr. Dent's house, urging their request, and the commissioner's commands, that he should go into the city. It was now suggested to Howqua that the morrow was the Sabbath, the foreigners' day for religious worship. The suggestion was promptly acceded to by the old gentleman, and the discussions suspended during the following day, when the foreigners engaged in public worship in their chapel, as usual on Sabbath days, without molestation. The same privilege was enjoyed through the whole of the crisis, on each successive Lord's day, and the services numerously attended.

At Macao, the circular of the 22d was followed the next day by the following paper circulated by the chief superintendent.

No. 6.

*Public Notice to British Subjects.*

The considerations that have moved the undersigned to give public notice to all her majesty's subjects that he is without confidence in the justice and moderation of the provincial government, are: The dangerous, unprecedented, and unexplained circumstance of a public execution before the factories at Canton, to the imminent hazard of life and property, and total disregard of the honor and dignity of his own and the other western governments, whose flags were recently flying in that square; the unusual assemblage of troops, vessels of war, fire-ships, and other menacing preparations; the communication, by the command of the provincial government, that in the present posture of affairs the foreigners were no longer to seek for passports to leave Canton (according to the genius of our own countries, and the principles of reason, if not an act of declared war, at least its immediate and inevitable preliminary); and lastly, the threatening language of the high commissioner and provincial authorities, of the most general application, and dark and violent character. Holding it, therefore, impossible to maintain continued peaceful intercourse with safety, honor, or advantage, till definite and satisfactory explanations have passed in all these particulars, both as respects the past and the future, the undersigned has now to give further notice that he shall forthwith demand passports for all such of her majesty's subjects as may think fit to proceed outside, within the space of ten days from the date that his application reaches the government; such date hereafter to be made known.

And he has to counsel and enjoin all her majesty's subjects in urgent terms to make immediate preparations for moving their property on board the ships *Reliance*, *Orwell*, and *George the IV.*, or other

British vessels at Whampoa, to be conveyed to Macao; forwarding him, without delay, a sealed declaration and list of all actual claims against Chinese subjects, together with an estimate of all loss or damage to be suffered by reason of these proceedings of the Chinese government. And he has further to give notice, that the Portuguese government of this settlement has already pledged itself to afford her majesty's subjects, resident here, every protection in its power so long as they shall be pursuing no course of traffic within the limits of the settlement at variance with the laws of this empire. And he has most especially to warn her majesty's subjects that such strong measures, as it may be necessary to adopt on the part of her majesty's government without further notice than the present, cannot be prejudiced by their continued residence in Canton (beyond the period now fixed), upon their own responsibility, or without further guaranties from the undersigned. And he has further to give notice, that if the passports shall be refused for more than three days from the date that his application shall reach the provincial government, he will be driven to the conclusion that it is their purpose to detain all her majesty's subjects as hostages; and to endeavor to intimidate them into unsuitable concessions and terms, by the restraint of their persons, or by violence upon their lives or property, or by the death of native merchants in immediate connexion with them, both by ties of friendship and of interest; or by the like treatment of their native servants.

The undersigned, in conclusion, most respectfully submits these observations to the attention of all the foreigners in China: And the respective governments closely united by a community of feeling and interests, not only in their own quarters of the globe, but most especially in this peculiar country, he feels that he is performing an act of duty in offering them every humble assistance in his power on this and all similar occasions, when they may be of opinion that he can be useful to them.

Given under my hand and seal of office at Macao, this twenty-third day of March, one thousand eight hundred and thirty-nine.

(Signed) CHARLES ELLIOT, Chief Superintendent of the trade of British subjects in China.

Immediately after the publication of this notice, the chief superintendent started for Canton in his cutter, and arrived the next day near the fort below the city; from thence, in one of the boats of the sloop *Larne*, he safely reached the steps of the British consulate about sunset, closely followed by war-boats and cruisers. The British

flag was immediately hoisted, and a large concourse of foreigners assembled in the hall of the superintendent, who, in person, having escorted thither Mr. Dent from his own house, read to the meeting the public notice (No. 6.) given above.

No sooner had captain Elliot landed, than alarm spread rapidly, and orders to close every pass around the factories resounded from post to post among the police. In a few minutes, the public square was cleared of all the natives; the entrances to it closed and guarded; the doors of the hong, which on the two preceding nights had been watched by a few coolies, were now thronged with large companies of them, armed with spears, and provided with lanterns; a triple cordon of boats was placed along the banks of the river before the whole front of the factories, filled with armed men; soldiers were stationed on the roofs of the adjoining houses; and to close the scene, orders from the commissioner were given for all the compradors and servants to leave the hong. By about nine o'clock at night, not a native was remaining in the factories: and the foreigners, between two and three hundred in number, were their only inmates. Canton, or at least that part of it adjacent the factories, was now virtually under martial law. Patrols, sentinels, and officers, hastening hither and thither, with the blowing of trumpets and the beating of gongs, added confusion to the darkness and gloom of the night. Had there been only a little more excitement, the factories might have become another "Black Hole," or a scene of indiscriminate slaughter. In the course of the evening, some communication was made by captain Elliot to the local authorities, supposed to be a demand for passports in accordance with his public notice of the preceding day.

On Monday, the 25th, the Chinese were chiefly occupied in completing their arrangements for the safe detention of the foreigners, and orders were issued for constructing two rafts across the river, one near Howqua's fort, and the other near the fort in the Macao passage, both designed to prevent escape from the provincial city, and to guard against the approach of armed boats from Whampoa. There was no intention, however, on the part of foreigners to leave the factories, nor wish for interference from the shipping either at Whampoa or without the Bogue. Everything was done to prevent the least intercourse between foreigners and natives. No parcels, not even the smallest letters, could be sent to Macao or Whampoa, except at the most imminent hazard of life. It was reported, and generally believed, that in one instance the life of a boatman was taken, for his having been found carrying a European letter. No

food, nor even a bucket of water, was allowed to be brought to the factories.

In connection with these grave matters, it may be added that culinary affairs, with the various manipulations of washing, sweeping, making of beds, trimming of lamps, carrying of water, milking of cows, with all the minutiae of domestic work, now fell into fresh hands, and were managed by the respective parties in the best manner each could devise, prompted by necessity or amusement as the case might chance to be. Fortunately little or no sickness was experienced during the whole season of detention.

Tuesday morning, the 26th, came without any apparent change of public affairs. The guards were reinforced in the course of the day, and a line of sheds erected in front of the factories to serve as barracks for the coolies, who now acted in the character of soldiers, armed with swords, spears, and shields. An illustration was also afforded of the phrase in the commissioner's edict, (which at first seemed doubtful,) 'the able-bodied of the people;' companies of porters, boatmen, and other laborers, were collected and armed; and, under the command of subaltern officers, were marched round and round the square, manœuvring like boys at a mock-training.

The following proclamation, dated this day, was placarded on the walls of the superintendent's house and on Mingqua's hong.

No. 7.

Proclamation from his excellency, the high commissioner Lin, desiring foreigners speedily to deliver up their opium, under four heads, or for four reasons.

Firstly. Ye ought to make haste and deliver it up, by virtue of that reason which heaven hath implanted in all of us. I find that during the last several tens of years, the money out of which you have duped our people by means of your destructive drug, amounts I know not to how many tens of thousands of myriads! Thus, while you have been scheming after private advantage, with minds solely bent on profit, our people have been wasting their substance and losing their lives, and if the reason of heaven be just, think you that there will be no retribution? If, however, ye will now repent and deliver up your opium, by a well timed repentance, ye may yet avert judgment and calamities; if not, then your wickedness being greater, the consequences of that wickedness will fall more fearfully upon you! Ye are distant from your homes many tens of thousands of miles; your ships, in coming and going, cross a vast and trackless ocean; in it ye are exposed to the visitations of thunder and lightning and raging



storms, to the dangers of being swallowed up by monsters of the deep; and amid such perils fear ye not the retributive vengeance of heaven! Now our great emperor, being actuated by the exalted virtue of heaven itself, wishes to cut off this deluge of opium, which is the plainest proof that such is the intention of high heaven! It is then a traffic on which heaven looks with disgust, and who is he that may oppose its will! Thus, in the instance of the English chief Roberts who violated our laws; he endeavored to get possession of Macao by force, and at Macao he died! Again, in the 14th year of Taoukwang (1834), lord Napier bolted through the Bocca Tigris, but being overwhelmed with grief and fear he almost immediately died; and Morrison, who had been darkly deceiving him, died that very year also! Besides these, every one of those who have not observed our laws, have either on their return to their country been overtaken by the judgments of heaven, or silently cut off ere they could return thither! Thus then it is manifest that the heavenly dynasty may not be opposed! And still, oh ye foreigners, do you refuse to fear and tremble thereat?

Secondly. You ought to make immediate delivery of this opium, in order to compliance with the laws of the land. I have heard it said, that the laws of your own countries prohibit the smoking of opium, and that he who uses it, is adjudged to death! Thus plainly shewing that ye yourselves know it to be an article destructive to human life. If, then, your laws forbid it to be consumed by yourselves, and yet permit it to be sold that it may be consumed by others, this is not in conformity with the principle of doing unto others, what you would that they should do unto you: if, on the other hand, your laws prohibit its being sold, and ye yet continue to sell it by stealth, then are ye sporting with the laws of your own countries! And moreover, the laws of our Chinese empire look upon the seller as guilty of a crime of a deeper dye, than the mere smoker of opium. Now you foreigners, although ye were born in an outer country, yet for your property and maintenance do ye depend entirely upon our Chinese empire; and in our central land ye pass the greater part of your lives, and the lesser portion of your lives is passed at home; the food that ye eat every day, not less than the vast fortunes ye amass, proceed from nought but the goodness of our emperor; which is showered upon you in far greater profusion than upon our own people. And how is it, then, that ye alone know not to tremble and obey before the sacred majesty of your laws! In former times, although opium was prohibited, yet the penalty attached thereto, did not amount to

a very severe punishment: this arose from the extreme mildness of our government; and therefore it was that your clandestine dealings in the drug were not scrutinized with any extraordinary rigor. Now, however, our great emperor looks upon the opium trade with the most intense loathing, and burns to have it cut off for ever; so that henceforward, not only is he who sells it adjudged to death, but he who does no more than smoke it, must also undergo the same penalty of the law! Now try and reflect for one moment. If ye did not bring this opium to China, how should the people of our inner land be able either to sell it or to smoke it? The lives of our own people which are forfeited to the laws, are taken from them by your unrighteous procedure: then what reason is there that the lives of our own people should be thus sacrificed, and that ye alone should escape the awful penalty! Now I, the high commissioner, looking up to the great emperor, and feeling in my own person his sacred desire to love and cherish the men from afar, do mercifully spare you your lives. I wish nothing more than that ye deliver up all the opium you have got, and forthwith write out a duly prepared bond to the effect, that you will henceforth never more bring opium to China, and should you bring it, agreeing that the cargo be confiscated, and the people who bring it put to death. This is pardoning what is past, and taking preventive measures against the future: why any longer cherish a foolish indiscriminate generosity! Moreover, without discussing about the opium which ye have sold in by-gone years, and adding up its immense amount, let us only speak about that quantity which during the last years ye have clandestinely sold, which I presume was no small matter, hardly equal to the quantity which ye have now stored up in your receiving ships, and which I desire may be entirely surrendered to the mutual advantage of all. Where is there the slightest chance or prospect that after this you will be permitted to dupe our deluded people out of their money, or inveigle them to do an act in which destruction overtakes them! I have with deep respect examined the statutes of this the Ta Tsing dynasty, and upon these statutes I find it recorded, "If a Chinese or a foreigner break the laws they shall be judged and condemned by the same statute," and words to that effect. Now upon former occasions we have condemned foreigners to death, as in the case of having killed our people, they require to give life, &c., &c., of which we have instances recorded. Now think for a little: depriving an individual of his life is a crime committed in a moment, and still the perpetrator of it must forfeit his own life in return. But he who sells opium, has laid



a plot to swindle a man out of his money, as well as to deprive him of his life; and how can one say that it is only a single individual, or a single family, that the opium seller thus dupes and entangles in destruction! And for a crime of this magnitude, ought one to die or not to die? And still will ye refuse to deliver up your opium? Which is the way to preserve your lives? Oh ye foreigners, do ye deeply ponder upon this!

Thirdly. You ought to make immediate delivery of this opium, by reason of your feelings as men. Ye come to this market of Canton to trade, and ye profit thereby full threefold. Every article of commerce that ye bring with you, no matter whether it be coarse or fine, in whole pieces or in small, there is not one iota of it that is not sold off and consumed; and of the produce of our country, whether it be for feeding you, for clothing you, for any kind of use, or for mere sale, there is not a description that we do not permit you to take away with you, so that not only do you reap the profit of the inner land by the goods which you bring, but moreover by means of the produce of our central land do you gather gold from every country to which you transport it. Supposing that you cut off and cast away your traffic in the single article of opium, then the other business which you do will be much increased; you will thereon reap your threefold profit comfortably, and you may, as previously, go on acquiring wealth in abundance: thus neither violating the laws, nor laying up store for after misery. What happiness, what delight will be yours! But if on the other hand, ye will persist in carrying on the opium traffic, then such a course of conduct must infallibly lead to the cutting off of your general trade. I would like to ask of you if under the whole heavens ye have such an excellent market as this is? Then without discussion about tea and rhubarb, things which you could not exist without, and every kind and description of silk, a thing which you could not carry on your manufacture without; there are under the head of eatable articles, white sugar candy, cassia, cassia buds, &c., &c.; and under the head of articles for use, vermilion, gamboge, alum, camphor, &c.: how can your countries do without these? And yet our central land is heaped up and overflowing with every kind of commodity, and has not the slightest occasion for any of your importations from abroad! If on account of opium, the port be closed against you, and it is no longer in your power to trade more, will it not be yourselves, who have brought it upon yourselves? Nay, further, as regards the article of opium, there is now no man who dares to buy it, and yet ye store it up in your receiving

ships, where you have so much to pay per month for rent; day and night ye must have laboring men to watch and guard. And why all this useless and enormous expense? A single typhoon, or one blaze of fire, and they are forthwith overwhelmed by the billows, or they sink amid the consuming element! These are all things very likely to happen! What better plan, then, than at once to deliver up your opium, and to reap enjoyments and rewards by so doing!

Fourthly. You ought to make a speedy delivery of your opium by reason of the necessity of the case. Ye foreigners from afar, in coming hither to trade, have passed over an unbounded ocean; your prospects for doing business depend entirely on your living on terms of harmony with your fellow-men, and keeping your own station in peace and quietness. Thus may you reap solid advantage and avoid misfortune! But if you will persist in selling your opium, and will go on involving the lives of our foolish people in your toils, there is not a good or upright man whose head and heart will not burn with indignation at your conduct; they must look upon the lives of those who have suffered for smoking and selling the drug as sacrificed by you; the simple country folks and the common people must feel anything but well pleased, and the wrath of a whole country is not a thing easily restrained: these are circumstances about which ye cannot but feel anxious! The men who go abroad are said to adhere bigotedly to a sense of honor. Now our officers are every one of them appealing to your sense of honor, and on the contrary we find (to our amazement!) that ye have not the slightest particle of honor about you! Are you quite tranquil and composed at this? And will ye yet acknowledge the necessity of the case or not? Moreover, viewing it as an article which ought never to be sold at all, and more especially considering that it is not permitted to be sold at this present moment, what difficulty should you make about the matter? Why feel the smallest regret to part with it? Still further, as ye do not consume it in your own country, why bootlessly take in back? If you do not now deliver it up to the government, pray what will be the use of keeping it on hand? After having once made the delivery of it, your trade will go on flourishing more abundantly than ever! Polite tokens of our regard will be heaped on you to overflowing, and oh, ye foreigners, will not this be happiness indeed! I, the high commissioner, as well as the governor and lieutenant-governor, cannot bear the idea of being unnecessarily harsh and severe, therefore it is that though I thus weary my mouth, as it were, entreating and exhorting you, yet do I not shrink from the task! Happiness and misery,

glory and disgrace, are in your own hands! Say not that I did not give you early warning thereof! A special proclamation, to be stuck up before the foreign factories.

Taoukwang, 19th year, 2d month, 12th day. (March 26th, 1839.)

Several applications were made, previous to this time, for port-clearances; to prevent the repetition of these, the following order was addressed to the hong merchants, and by them communicated to the foreigners.

No. 8.

Yu, collector of customs, &c., &c., at the port of Canton, proclaims to the hong merchants for their full information. During the stay of the commissioner in Canton, and while his measures against opium traffickers are in operation, all ships now anchored at Whampoa are prohibited from opening their holds, and must not attempt to leave the port without their clearances. The sub-prefect of Macao has been commanded to forbid the pilots [going on board]. Wherefore I issue this edict. On receipt of it let the hong merchants forthwith transmit copies of it to all foreign merchants for their information and obedience. The slightest opposition will be most severely punished. Haste! Haste! A special edict. Taoukwang, 19th year, 2d month, 12th day. (March 27th, 1839.)

(True translation.)

S. FEARON,

Chinese interpreter to the General Chamber of Commerce.

Early on Wednesday, March 27th, a public notice, which we subjoin, was published by the chief superintendent of British trade in China.

No. 9.

*Public Notice to British subjects.*

I, Charles Elliot, chief superintendent of the trade of British subjects in China, presently forcibly detained by the provincial government, together with all the merchants of my own and the other foreign nations settled here, without supplies of food, deprived of our servants, and cut off from all intercourse with our respective countries, (notwithstanding my own official demand to be set at liberty so that I might act without restraint,) have now received the commands of the high commissioner, issued directly to me under the seals of the honorable officers, to deliver into his hand all the opium held by the people of my country. Now I, the said chief superintendent, thus constrained by paramount motives affecting the safety of the lives and liberty of all the foreigners here present in Canton, and by other very

weighty causes, do hereby, in the name and on the behalf of her Britannic majesty's government enjoin and require all her majesty's subjects now present in Canton forthwith to make a surrender to me for the service of her said majesty's government, to be delivered over to the government of China, of all the opium under their respective control: and to hold the British ships and vessels engaged in the trade of opium subject to my immediate direction: and to forward to me without delay a sealed list of all the British owned opium in their respective possession. And I, the said chief superintendent, do now, in the most full and unreserved manner, hold myself responsible for, and on the behalf of her Britannic majesty's government, to all and each of her majesty's subjects surrendering the said British owned opium into my hands, to be delivered over to the Chinese government. And I, the said chief superintendent, do further specially caution all her majesty's subjects here present in Canton, owners of or charged with the management of opium, the property of British subjects, that failing the surrender of the said opium into my hands at or before six o'clock this day, I the said chief superintendent, hereby declare her majesty's government wholly free of all manner of responsibility in respect of the said British owned opium.

And it is specially to be understood that proof of British property and value of all British opium surrendered to me agreeably to this notice shall be determined upon principles and in a manner hereafter to be defined by her majesty's government.

Given under my hand and seal of office at Canton in China, this twenty-seventh day of March, one thousand eight hundred and thirty-nine, at six of the clock in the morning.

[L. S.]

(Signed)

CHARLES ELLIOT,

Chief superintendent of the trade of British subjects in China.

For captain Elliot's original communication to the local authorities, and their replies containing 'the commands of the high commissioner,' our readers will have to wait, we suppose, until the British parliament shall have called for them from the foreign office. We have reason to believe that only a small part of the official correspondence during the crisis has been made public; often, therefore, we must content ourselves with mere rumors and conjectures, instead of authentic facts. It was generally believed that a demand for passports was put into the hands of the hong merchants on the evening of the 24th, soon after capt. Elliot's arrival in Canton. If so, it must in due course have reached the governor and commissioner before noon on Monday the 25th; and a reply from the latter might be returned by



one o'clock on Tuesday, at which hour it is known that official papers reached the factories. We can easily imagine that the commissioner would rejoice to find a responsible head, such as now appeared in captain Elliot; and the latter, if we may judge from his public notice, given December 18th, respecting the 'illicit traffic within the Bogue,' would not shrink from doing what justice required.

At this juncture, affairs were in an extraordinary position, and must have been not a little embarrassing to all parties concerned. The facts of the case seem to have stood thus. The chief superintendent, immediately on hearing of the detention of foreigners here, directed the British flag to be hoisted at Hongkong, and the vessels scattered about outside to put themselves in a state of defense; at the same time (or immediately before doing this), he placed in the hands of the Chinese authorities at Macao a paper, declaring his readiness to meet the imperial will with regard to the illicit traffic in opium. Having taken these steps, he hastens hither, and demands passports for British subjects from the provincial city, but would say nothing about the cause of their detention. The commissioner in his reply, being entirely ignorant of western usages, would utterly disregard the demand for passports; and turning round to the chief superintendent, recapitulate what had been done, expatiate on the benevolence and power of the great emperor, denounce the unrighteous traffic, and conclude his edict with peremptory commands to captain Elliot to make a full and speedy surrender of all the opium, offering rewards for obedience, and threatening heavy penalties in case of refusal. In view of these commands, and 'other very weighty causes,' the preceding public notice was published, demanding, in the name of her majesty, the entire surrender of all British owned opium. This bold demand was promptly answered, in the immediate surrender of 20,283 chests, worth at cost prices ten or eleven millions of dollars!

The next public document contains a solemn pledge, from foreign merchants of all nations in Canton, *not to deal in opium, nor to attempt to introduce it into the Chinese empire.* This pledge was signed and given on the very day, the 25th of March, that closed the period fixed for receiving, in London, the essays on the opium traffic—essays designed to show the effects of the trade, and to point out the course which those connected with it ought to pursue. The pledge given was in the following terms, and quoted in a proclamation issued this day from the office of the prefect of Canton

## No. 10.

*Proclamation to the foreigners of all nations from the prefect of Canton.*

Choo, Kwangchow foo, &c., &c., proclaims to the hong merchants for their full information. The following official communication has been received from Liu the imperial commissioner, &c., dated the 13th day of the 2d month. (March 27th). "The foreigners of all nations have presented the following petition:

"The foreign merchants of all nations in Canton have received, with profound respect, the edict of his excellency, the imperial commissioner, and now beg leave respectfully to address his excellency, having already communicated, through the hong merchants, their intention of doing so with the least possible delay. They beg to represent, that being now made fully aware of the imperial commands for the entire abolition of the traffic in opium, the undersigned foreign merchants hereby pledge themselves not to deal in opium, nor to attempt to introduce it into the Chinese empire. Having now recorded their solemn pledge, they have only further respectfully to state to his excellency, that as individual foreign merchants they do not possess the power of controlling such extensive and important matters as those treated of in his excellency's edict; and they trust his excellency will approve of leaving a final settlement to be arranged through the representatives of their respective nations.' (Dated Canton, 25th March, 1839.)

"This coming before me, the commissioner, it appears by the petition that in obedience to my commands, they dare no longer traffic in opium. Their reverential obedience is thus manifested. They also earnestly entreat that as my will involved such important and heavy results, I will direct the superintendents and consuls of their several nations to manage the business.

"Now as respects the delivering up of opium, the superintendent Elliot has to-day handed up a duly prepared address delivering up the opium; and I, the commissioner, in due course commanded that the most minute particulars be examined into and handed up in the form of a clear and distinct report; when he must wait till I fix a day for receiving the opium. This is on record. As respects Elliot, therefore, there is no occasion for my again issuing my instructions; but the consuls must forthwith clearly report who they are, and their names and surnames, so as to enable me to act accordingly, and issue an edict immediately for their instruction. This edict is now issued to the Kwangchow foo for his information and obedience. Let him



forthwith send a reply with instructions to the hong merchants to transmit copies of it to the foreigners of all nations for their information and obedience, and report on the same. A special edict."

On receipt of the preceding, I issue this edict. When it reaches the said foreign merchants, in obedience thereto, let them forthwith state in a clear report the names and surnames of the consuls. Do not oppose. A special edict. March 27th, 1839.

Another edict was made public, dated the 27th of March. Two days previously, when the prefect was at the consoo-house, an address was presented to him for the commissioner. A reply, bearing the commissioner's seals of office, was brought this day by one of the linguists, and pasted on the front door of the American hong. A copy of the address which elicited it, and a translation of the commissioner's answer are subjoined.

No. 11.

*Mr. King's address to the imperial commissioner, Lin.*

Your excellency's edict of the 18th instant having been communicated to the undersigned, he hereby respectfully replies — that during the many years he has been engaged in trade with Canton, he has never bought, sold, received, or delivered, one catty of opium or one tael of sycee silver; he has at the same time used his best efforts to dissuade all men from the injurious traffic. He is now ready and hereby does engage to pursue in future the same course as heretofore, under the penalties desired by the Chinese government. Having done that, the undersigned begs that the business of his ships and all his other business may be permitted to proceed, and his servants returned to his factory; he has only to add that he has delayed beyond the period fixed, in the hope that all the merchants would come forward at one and the same time with an address. March 25th, 1839.

Reply of Lin, high imperial commissioner of the celestial dynasty, to the address of the American merchant King.

On my arrival in Canton, I heard that the said foreigner King, never trafficed in opium; of all he is the most praiseworthy; but when I, the commissioner, early promulgated my decree, requiring all the foreigners to deliver up their opium to government, why was not the said foreigner able quickly to induce them to do so? On a former day, because much time had elapsed without receiving any report of its being delivered up, the holds of the ships were in due course closed; moreover, the bad foreigners having a desire to escape, and their factories being open and accessible on every side and from every quarter, it was difficult to prevent their so doing. Hence

it was that all the compradors and servants have been temporarily removed, in order to prevent their pointing out to them a way of escape. Now, according to what is stated in the address, "it was hoped that all the merchants would at once comply, &c." if they really act thus, and immediately deliver up all their opium, then what difficulty can there be in having all business go on in its usual course? But at the present time all the foreigners have not delivered up their opium; and while on the one hand I cannot allow the bad foreigners to involve the good, so neither can I, on the other, for the sake of a single case, change my great plans. Therefore, in regard to the opening of the trade, &c., for the time being it is difficult to grant the request. I give instructions to the prefect of Kwangchow, that he may direct the hong merchants clearly to explain this edict, that he (King) may early induce all the foreign merchants to comply and give up their opium without delay, that they may in no way be involved thereby. March 27th, 1839.

On the 28th, three of the four streets, leading into the square before the factories, were walled up, thus cutting off all access or way of escape, except by one narrow entrance, at which a military guard was stationed; and thus too the avenue to the ophthalmic hospital, hitherto left open, was closed. The back-doors, by which some of the factories opened into the street running along the north side of them, had been walled up on a previous day. In the afternoon some sheep, pigs, poultry, and other provisions, were sent to the consoo-house by order of the commissioner; and the next day these were 'graciously bestowed' on the *fanquis*, most of whom, however, chose to refuse them. Coolies also were sent to bring them some water. Late in the afternoon the following circular came out from the office of the chief superintendent.

No. 12.

I, Charles Elliot, chief superintendent of the trade of British subjects in China, do require any British subject or subjects, in the name of her Britannic majesty's government, who may have opium within his or their factory to acknowledge the same to him in person within the space of two hours from this date.

(Signed) CHARLES ELLIOT, chief superintendent of the trade of British subjects in China. Canton 6 p. m., 28th March, 1839.

The British superintendent having declared his inability to control any others besides his own countrymen, and the commissioner, having ascertained the names of the foreign consuls, issued his com-

mands directly to them. It is worthy of remark, that on this occasion the Chinese government has preferred to communicate with foreigners directly through its own officers, and not through the hong merchants. In Chinese the same term, *ling sze*, has been used, both for consul and superintendent.

No. 13.

An edict from the imperial commissioner Lin, addressed to the foreign consuls, Mr. Snow and others, communicated by Choo, the prefect of Canton.

An official communication has been received from his excellency Lin, governor of Hookwang, and high imperial commissioner; it is as follows:

“I, the high commissioner, having received the emperor’s decree to repair to Canton to make inquiries and act respecting the business of opium, did, without delay on my arrival here, give commands to foreigners of every nation to deliver up their opium, and to give bonds never more to bring it to this country. The said foreign consul Snow, the Dutch consul Van Basel, and the French consul Van Loffelt, must all have seen and heard these commands. Now, on the 27th instant, the foreign merchants of every nation presented an address, declaring that hereafter, in coming to Canton to trade, they will never more bring any opium, but intimating that orders should be given for referring business of great importance to the control of their respective consuls. Of such importance is evidently the delivering up of the opium. The said foreign merchants, being of different nations, and their cargoes belonging to different owners, declared it to be difficult to determine what ought to be done, unless the business were referred to some responsible head. It is necessary therefore to enjoin it on all the said foreign consuls, that they severally take up the business in detail, make clear inquiry in order, and prepare and present complete statements of all the opium, that it may be delivered up. Then all will be safe and secure.

“Now the English superintendent, Elliot, has sent in his report stating there are in his possession 20,283 chests, which he is ready to deliver up. I, the high imperial commissioner, have given my perspicuous reply, and have named a period for it to be received. This is on record. The traffic in opium hitherto carried on by the American and other foreign merchants *has not been less* than that of the English. Why is it, therefore, that the said consuls have not made out a true statement and delivered it up to government? Truly they have been very remiss in their conduct.

“Wherefore this edict is dispatched to the Kwangchow foo (or prefect of Canton); on the receipt of it let him immediately instruct the hong merchants to convey the same to all the said consuls, Snow and others, that they may without delay prepare full statements of all the opium in the possession of the merchants of their respective countries, and deliver up the same, and wait till I, the high imperial commissioner, confer with the governor and lieut.-governor, and appoint a period for its being examined and received, at the same time with that delivered up by the English. Let not the smallest quantity be concealed. If the said consuls conform implicitly to these commands, and make a complete and entire delivery, not only shall the past be forgiven, but it will be incumbent on me to memorialize the emperor, and to request that rewards may be conferred. But if there be any procrastination indulged, or if the whole be not given up, they will involve themselves in guilt, when repentance will be too late.”

Having received these commands, I do now convey them to all the said consuls, Snow and others, that they may, without delay, prepare full statements of all the opium in the possession of the merchants of their respective countries, and deliver up the same, and wait till the imperial commissioner confers with the governor and lieut.-governor, appointing a period for its being examined and received, at the same time with that delivered up by the English.

Let not the smallest quantity be concealed. If the said consuls conform implicitly to these commands, and make a complete and entire delivery, not only shall the past be forgiven, but it will become necessary to memorialize the emperor, and request that rewards may be conferred. But if there be any procrastination indulged, or the whole be not given up, they will involve themselves in guilt when repentance will be too late. A special edict.

Taoukwang, 19th year, 2d month, 14th day. (March 28th, 1839.)

On the 29th, it being Good Friday, the appropriate services were performed in the chapel, by request of captain Elliot. Until this day, foreigners were allowed to go up Old China street and to the consou-house, which was now forbidden, and all were restricted to their factories, and the narrow space in front of them. The gate of the British consulate was strongly guarded day and night by scores of coolies, under the immediate inspection of several of the hong merchants. No native was allowed to enter the square without a passport. In the afternoon two buckets of spring water were brought to each house. In the evening, which was very dark and rainy, all the



pleasure boats belonging to the foreigners (forty or more in number) were hauled up high and dry on the shore.

Following the order of time, this is the place to introduce a series of public replies, published by the commissioner in the form of a proclamation. Two copies, bearing the impress of the commissioner's seals of office, were pasted up in the square, one on Mingqua's hong, the other on the wall in front of the British consulate.

No. 14.

(1.) Reply of the 27th of March, to the address of the English superintendent Elliot surrendering opium.

The representation that in obedience to the commands he will deliver up the opium manifests a respectful sense of duty and understanding of matters. I find that the store-ships at present in these seas are in all twenty-two; and the general amount of the opium they have on board, I am already informed of by my inquiries. The superintendent can have no difficulty in instantly ascertaining from all the foreigners in the factories the precise amounts, and immediately writing out and presenting a clear statement thereof, to enable me, the commissioner, in conjunction with the governor and lieutenant-governor, at once to declare a certain period, when we will ourselves go to receive what is delivered up. He must not make an untrue report, lest he bring on himself the offense of concealing, deceiving, and glossing over. Beware of this!

(2.) Reply of the 25th of March, to the address of the English superintendent Elliot stating the amount of opium surrendered, 20,283 chests.

By this address it appears, that the amount of opium has been ascertained, and the needful examination and receipt thereof are respectfully awaited. The real sincerity and faithfulness thus shown are worthy of praise. I find that the amount of 20,283 chests, stated by the said superintendent, has reference only to such as is brought by the English foreigners. I, the commissioner, have assuredly no suspicion that there is any insincerity behind. And the statement that there is some at other ports elsewhere, I presume also to be the fact. But I have considered, that, before the issuing of the orders to deliver up, it is difficult to feel assured that there has been no opium laid up in the several foreign factories, nor any brought in the various vessels at Whampoa. The question does not now stop with what is in deposit on board the store-ships: but at this time, when punishment is not to be inflicted on past offenses, it is essential that all the opium, wherever laid up, should be completely surrendered. Assuredly



the offenses of those who have before laid up a store thereof shall not be visited upon them. I have now, in conjunction with the governor and lieut.-governor, determined on the rules to be observed in regard to the delivery of the opium. Besides sending a copy thereof separately to the prefect of Kwangchow that he may desire the hong merchants to make known the same, I also require of the said superintendent instantly to ascertain what quantity of opium there may be in the foreign factories; and on the 29th, officers shall be deputed to receive the same:—what quantity of opium there may be on board the ships at Whampoa, to examine and receive which officers shall be sent on the 30th:—and what quantity there is on board the twenty-two store-ships outside, to examine and receive which we, the commissioner and the governor, will ourselves go to the Bocca Tigris. Whatever there may be stored up at other ports, since the said superintendent has promised to deliver up the whole, he should of course be held responsible for the delivery of, from time to time as it shall arrive. Should the amount be in excess of the 20,233 chests it must still be fully surrendered. In so doing the sincerity of the purpose will be shown. And assuredly no blame shall be attached to the inaccuracy of the original report on account of such excess. Besides this, the American, French, and Dutch nations have also consuls in superintendence of affairs, to whom orders have now been given in like manner to pay obedience, and speedily to represent the real amount, waiting till examination can be made and the whole received. Though the said superintendent be peculiarly charged with the control of the English foreigners, yet having been permitted by the crown, in consequence of the governor's representation, to remain as superintendent in the foreign factories, he should spread abroad his monitions, so that all may speedily deliver up what opium they have, so as to enable us to memorialize the throne conjointly, and request a conferment of favors from the great emperor in order to afford encouragement and stimulate exertion. Now is the time for the foreigners of all nations to repent of their faults, and pass over to the side of virtue. This is the day and time of reformation: and if embraced, the enjoyment of unending advantages will be the result. Let none on any account make excuses, or seek delay, so as to incur cause for future repentance.

(3.) Reply of the 29th of March, to the English superintendent Elliot's address requesting that as usual the compradors and servants should be allowed, and that the passage boats should be permitted to run between this, and the outer anchorages and Macao.

Yesterday the said superintendent, when addressing me in reply, promised for himself that he would certainly deliver up the opium of his nation to the amount 20,283 chests, handing over the whole quantity as it should be brought into his hands: I therefore answered in his praise, and at the same time clearly gave directions in regard to the places where, and times when, the delivery should be made. And I besides sent, in a separate form, a list of rules, and required of him to write foreign letters (or orders), to enable me to depute officers to proceed therewith to the store-ships, and call on them to make the delivery. This was a most simple, convenient, and easy mode of proceeding. If the said superintendent were really acting with sincerity of purpose, he certainly should have speedily proceeded to obey my commands. Though he say, that in the foreign factories, and on board the ships at Whampoa, there is now no opium, yet the opium laid up on board the twenty-two store-ships is all deposited therein by the foreigners residing in the factories. Ordinarily, when combining with Chinese traitors to dispose thereof clandestinely, it has been always practicable to obtain foreign orders written at the factories, and giving the same to the fast-boats to proceed therewith outside and get possession of the commodity. How is it then that on this occasion, when surrendering the opium, there is no knowledge of this mode of operation?

In the present address, it is represented that now, while the north wind is blowing, it is feared that vessels outside, having opium on board, may perhaps set sail and go away. Now I find that of late the store-ships have all returned to Lintin, Macao roads, and the other anchorages, and there remained; doubtless because they have heard that commands have been issued requiring delivery of the opium, and therefore have not dared to sail far away. *They* are yet disposed to await and pay obedience; while *you* would desire to stir up and make them go. I would ask, seeing that you have taken on you the responsibility in this matter, how, if the store-ships should dare to sail away, you will be able to sustain the heavy criminality attaching to you? The address talks too of close restraint, as it were imprisonment; which is still more laughable. I find that from the 18th of March, when the commands were given to all the foreigners to deliver up their opium, everything remained as usual until the 24th, when you came in a boat to Cantou, and that night wished to take Dent and abscond with him. It was after this, that cruisers were stationed to examine and observe all that went in and out. It was because you were void of truth and good faith, that it became unavoidably neces-

sary to take preventive steps. As to the compradors and others, they are in fact Chinese traitors, who would also suggest absconding and escape. How then could the withdrawal of them be omitted? Yesterday, too, when you had made a statement of the amount of opium, I at once conferred on you a reward, consisting of sundry articles of food. Is this the manner in which prisoners are ever treated?

I, the high commissioner, in conjunction with the governor and lieutenant-governor, looking up to the great emperor, embody his all-comprehending kindness, and in our treatment of you foreigners of every nation, never go beyond these two words, favor and justice. Such as display contumacy and contempt, how can they have aught but justice dealt out to them? But such as show a respectful sense of duty, shall assuredly be tenderly intreated with favor. Do you now simply command plainly all the foreigners, with instant speed to prepare letters, and hand them in to government, to enable it to give commands to all the store-ships to deliver up in orderly succession the opium, and as soon as this shall be delivered up, everything shall without fail be restored to its ordinary condition. This requisition is indeed conformable to reason: what difficulty is there in complying with it? If in place of speedily making delivery, you frame pretexts for diverting attention, in the hope that after the strict preventive measures shall be withdrawn, you may form some other scheme, who cannot see through such artful devices? And will you be enabled to make a repetition of such attempts?

Besides deputing officers to proceed to the hong merchants' consou-house, there to give verbal commands and so prevent delay, you are also hereby required to act speedily in obedience to this my reply. Do not again be working at excuses and delays, thereby drawing on yourself cause for future repentance.

(4.) Reply of the 30th of March to the English superintendent Elliot's address, proposing to send Johnston outside.

This address represents, that the deputy superintendent, Johnston, shall be sent outside, to call together all the vessels, and deliver up the whole amount of opium; and gives conveyance to an order to him for my perusal. I, the high commissioner, have carefully examined the terms of this order; and though I find therein nothing improper, yet considering that in a previous address the said superintendent stated, that taking on him the power entrusted to him by his sovereign, he had required of the people of his nation immediately to surrender the whole of the opium,—it is plain to me that as the said superintendent has the power of making such a requisition, he can have

no difficulty in giving orders directly to all the store-ships; and what necessity then is there for committing the matter to Johnston, and thus multiplying the twists and turns of the transaction? I, the high commissioner, have given reiterated official replies, requiring all the foreigners to write orders themselves, on the ground that in the ordinary manner of selling the opium, they have always thus disembarked the goods, without committing an error once in a hundred times. Why then is not the opium surrendered in this comparatively simple, convenient, and easy way? Let me now weigh the matter for you. The said superintendent having powers to act, and having repeatedly acknowledged before me his responsibility, cannot have the smallest loophole of escape therefrom. How can he possibly have the power to require of all the foreigners to deliver up the opium, and yet not have the power to require that they write orders for the same? It is his duty then immediately to pay obedience to my reiterated commands, and speedily to require of all the foreigners severally to write foreign orders for the number of chests of opium they have on board each vessel by name, and to present the same to government through the said superintendent, covered by a general order from himself, that these being conveyed to the store-ships, they may in orderly succession make delivery. The earlier the day of the complete delivery, the earlier will be the day for the commercial intercourse to resume its ordinary course, not stopping merely at giving permission to the passage-boats to run. The said superintendent must know that I, the commissioner, give my commands and cautions in full sincerity, and he must speedily pay implicit obedience. He must not be turning incontinently this way and that, thereby bringing criminality and cause of sorrow on himself. The foreign order is sent back herewith.

During this day, Saturday the 30th, the magistrates of the districts came into the square, on a tour of inspection. Supplies of food from the commissioner were sent to captain Elliot; and, being refused by him, were all passed over to the hands of the linguists. The following edict was sent to the Chamber of Commerce.

No. 15.

Choo, Kwangchow foo, &c., proclaims to Wetmore, chairman of the General Chamber of Commerce, for his full information. The following communication has just been respectfully received from Lin, the imperial commissioner, &c.

“On the 15th day of the 2d month, Wetmore, chairman, &c., reported as follows:



“A respectful address. The chairman of the General Chamber of Commerce has received with profound respect the proclamation of his excellency the commissioner, addressed to all foreigners in Canton; and in compliance with the requisition of said document reports, that Peter Wanten Snow is consul for the United States of America; Magdalinus Jacobus Senn Van Basel, consul of the king of Holland; and J. P. Van Loffelt, at present at Macao, is reported to be the acting consul for the king of the French.’

“It appears that the object of this report being brought before me is to hand up a list of the names and surnames of the several nations’ consuls: to which, as is proper, I reply.

“I, the commissioner, having previously informed myself, by examination (of their names), as was proper, yesterday issued another edict commanding the said several countries to send in a true and just account, detailing the quantity of opium in their possession, and to wait till I was ready to receive it. Why have they not yet done this? Let the said foreigners be forthwith urgently admonished by the chairman of the Chamber of Commerce to make out the required document, and at an early day to deliver up their opium. Do not attempt to escape this duty, lest you yourself become involved in error. In consideration of the circumstances I issue this edict for your information and obedience. This proclamation is to be sent to the Kwangchow foo who will deliver it to the hong merchants with orders to transmit it to the said Wetmore, for his instant obedience. Do not oppose!”

Upon receipt of the above I, as is proper, forthwith issue this edict to the said Wetmore, who upon receipt of it must accord his instant obedience. Do not oppose. A special edict. March 30th, 1839.

On the same day, another demand for opium was made on the American consul. We subjoin a translation of the edict.

#### No. 16.

An edict from Lin, imperial commissioner, &c., to the American consul Snow, communicated by Choo, prefect of Canton. An official communication has been received from Lin, governor of Hookwang, and high imperial commissioner; as follows:

“On the 16th day of the 2d month, of the 19th year of Taoukwang, (March 30th, 1839,) the American consul, Snow, presented an address as follows. (Here the address is copied.) This having come before me, the high imperial commissioner, I find that already, before this time, the English superintendent Elliot, presented an address, declaring that the opium belonging to English subjects, which he had re-



quired of them to deliver up to him, was 20,283 chests, and that he had no control over the people of other countries not under British rule. This declaration of Elliot's is clear and explicit. Now I, the high imperial commissioner, commanded Snow, the American consul, to make out a clear and full statement of all the opium of his country and present the same for delivery. But he comes forward in reply, with this statement that already 1540 chests have been taken and delivered up to Elliot to be handed over to government. This really is greatly at variance with Elliot's statement, and is a mere pretext. I command obedience to the previous instructions, that a full and true statement be made out and be presented for delivery. Let there be no concealment to involve guilt. Wherefore, I send this edict to the prefect, that he may immediately convey it to the hong merchants, to be by them transmitted to the said consul Snow, to obey the same without opposition."

Having received the above, I forthwith transmit it to the said foreign consul Snow, in order that he may obey the same without opposition. A special edict.

Taonkwang, 19th year, 2d month, 16th day. (March 30th, 1839.)

On Monday, April 1st, an edict was addressed to the chairman of the Chamber of Commerce, commanding him to urge the American consul to make a speedy surrender of a quantity of opium not less than that given up by the British superintendent. The Dutch consul also came in for a share of the commissioner's particular regards.

#### No. 17.

An edict from Lin, the commissioner to Van Basel, Dutch consul in China, communicated by Choo the prefect of Canton.

An official communication has been received from Lin, the governor of Hookwang, and imperial commissioner; it is as follows:

"On the 16th day, 2d month, of the 19th year of Taoukwang, (March 30th, 1839,) the Dutch consul Van Basel presented an address in the following terms:

(Mr. Van Basel had in his address informed his excellency, the commissioner, that neither he nor any of his nation held any opium; informing his excellency at the same time of his having in vain applied to the hoppo for leave for himself to go to Macao, and for the port clearance of a Dutch ship at Whampoa—that therefore he considered himself and the people of his nation forcibly detained, and he again asked that leave to depart might be given.)

"This coming before me, the high commissioner, it is replied: now because all the opium of the several nations has not been given up, the holds of the ships have been closed in conformity with the laws:

and for the sake of a single vessel of your nation it is impracticable to break in upon the present preventive measures. And although the said foreigner has no opium, he ought still to induce all the foreigners resident in the factories immediately to give up all the opium in their possession. Then, as usual, the ships' holds shall be opened and the trade resumed. Moreover, no apprehension need be entertained respecting the detention of your country's vessel. Wherefore, this edict is now dispatched to the prefect of Canton, that he may immediately deliver the same to the hong merchants, to be by them transmitted to the said Dutch consul, Van Basel, that he may act in conformity thereto without opposition."

Now having received this edict, I immediately transmit it to the said consul Van Basel, that he may act in conformity thereto without opposition.

In the course of this day, (April 1st,) the hong merchants gave formal notice to foreigners, warning them not to allow any native to enter their factories. They said it was expected the officers would search the several houses, and that in case any Chinese was found he would be put to death.

The mode in which the Chinese authorities should receive the opium, was after much discussion finally determined, on Tuesday, the 2d April; at which time captain Elliot received a communication direct from the commissioner, ratifying the agreement. That document has not been made public. Somewhat of its import may be understood from the subjoined public notice, published the next morning.

No. 18.

*Public Notice to British subjects.*

The undersigned has now to announce that arrangements have been made for the delivery of the opium lately surrendered to him for her majesty's service, by which his excellency, the high commissioner, has stipulated that the servants shall be restored after one fourth of the whole be delivered, the passage-boats be permitted to run after one half be delivered, the trade opened after three fourths be delivered, and everything to proceed as usual after the whole be delivered (the signification of which last expression the undersigned does not understand). Breach of faith (and his excellency, not unnaturally, is pleased to suppose that breach of faith may be possible,) is to be visited, after three days of loose performance of engagements, with the cutting off of supplies of fresh water; after three days more, with the stoppage of food; and after three days more, with the last degree of

severity on the undersigned himself. He passes by these grave forms of speech without comment. But with the papers actually before him, and all the circumstances in hand, he is satisfied that the effectual liberation of the queen's subjects, and all the other foreigners in Canton, depends upon the promptitude with which this arrangement is completed. The maintenance of the national character, and the validity of the claim for indemnity depend upon that scrupulousness of fidelity with which he is well assured his countrymen will enable him to fulfill his public obligations to this government. As soon as the whole opium surrendered to him be delivered over to the Chinese officers, it will be the duty of the undersigned to communicate with his countrymen again. But it is a present relief to him to express to the whole foreign community his admiration for the patience and kindly feeling which has uniformly distinguished this community throughout these trying circumstances. And he offers his own countrymen his grateful thanks for their confidence in his sincerest efforts to lead them safely out of their actual strait. The ultimate satisfactory solution of the remaining difficulties need give no man an anxious thought. The permanent stability of the British trade with this empire, with honor and advantage to all parties, rests upon a firm foundation:—upon the wisdom, justice, and power of her majesty's government.

(Signed) CHARLES ELLIOT,

Chief superintendent of the trade of British subjects in China.

In the course of Wednesday the 3d, arrangements were made for Mr. Johnston, the deputy superintendent, to leave Canton for the purpose of directing the delivery of the opium from the receiving ships without the Bogue. This afforded the first opportunity, since the commencement of the detention, for sending letters "outside." At about six o'clock, Mr. Johnston, accompanied by Mr. Thom, as Chinese interpreter, proceeded in a native boat to Macao under an escort of Chinese officers, attended by hong merchants and linguists.

A long succession of wearisome days and nights of suspense now awaited the '*poor fanquis*,' shut up in their narrow confines, 'close and safe as fish in a tank,' alternately amused and tantalized with all manner of vague rumors and curious speculations. Indeed, before the siege was ended, so stale did everything become, that fears and frights were turned into jests and jokes; and the voice of the sentinel, grave and manly like a true son of Mars, and regularly timed to the beat of the war-gong, was exchanged for the puerile echo of sleepy urchins, uttered in tones most consummately ridiculous: the *h-i-u-g*

*c-h-ó*, or "all's well," heard loud and full at first, after a few days became *kàng chǒ*, scarcely audible at irregular intervals.

In the course of Thursday, the 4th of April, the foreign merchants were requested by the hong merchants to assemble in the hall of the General Chamber of Commerce, at noon the next day. Aware of the object of the meeting, the community declined to assemble; the general committee of the Chamber, however, convened, and were presented with a paper, of which the following is a close translation.

No. 19.

*Proposed bond regarding opium.*

A prepared voluntary bond. The English superintendent Elliot, and the deputy superintendent Johnston, at the head of the English merchants M. N., the Indian merchants, O. P., the Moorish merchants, Q. R., the ——— merchants, S. T., and the ——— merchants, U. V., hereby fully and earnestly bind themselves for ever to cease from opium.

They thus bind themselves: that, whereas the merchants of the English nation and its dependencies, during their long continued commercial intercourse with the province of Kwangtung, have been thoroughly imbued with the dewy influences of the favor of the celestial court, and have rejoiced in the acquisition of unbounded gains; but of late years a gain-seeking set of men have clandestinely brought the filthy opium, have stored it up on board warehousing ships in the seas of Kwangtung, and have there sold it, to the infringement of the laws of the celestial court; and whereas the great emperor has now been pleased to give his special commission to one of his high officers to repair to Canton, and inquire into and act regarding this matter: they have now begun to have knowledge of the extreme severity of the prohibitory enactments, and have been filled with unutterable dread and terror; they have respectfully taken all the opium laid up on board the store-ships, and have delivered up the whole to government; they intreat and implore that a memorial may be laid before the throne, requesting the great emperor to show clemency beyond the bounds of law, and remit their past offenses; the store-ships that have discharged all, they will direct to sail back to their respective countries; and Elliot, &c., will plainly address the sovereign of his nation, that she may strictly proclaim to all the merchants that they are to pay implicit obedience to the prohibitory laws of the celestial court,—that they must not again introduce any opium

into this inner land,—that they cannot be allowed any longer to manufacture opium.

From the commencement of autumn in this present year, any merchant vessel coming to Kwangtung that may be found to bring opium, shall be immediately and entirely confiscated, both vessel and cargo, to the use of government, no trade shall be allowed to it, and the parties shall be left to suffer death at the hands of the celestial court,—such punishment they will readily submit to.

As regards such vessels as may arrive here in the two quarters of spring and summer, now current, they will have left their countries while yet ignorant of the existing investigations and severe enforcement of prohibitions; such of them as in this state of ignorance bring any opium, shall surrender it as they arrive, not daring in the smallest degree to conceal or secrete it.

They unite together in this plain declaration, that this their full and earnest bond is true.

In the course of this day, the 5th, several large boats were dispatched to the Bogue, to receive the opium about to be delivered over to the Chinese government.

On Saturday, another reply, in the form of an edict, was addressed, by the commissioner, to the Dutch consul, in the following terms.

No. 20.

An edict from the imperial commissioner addressed to the Dutch consul Van Basel through the prefect of Canton.

An official communication has been received from his excellency Lin, high imperial commissioner, governor of Hookwang, &c. It is as follows :

“Another address has been presented from the Dutch consul Van Basel, in which he says :

(Mr. Van Basel only reiterated his demand for passports for himself and Dutch subjects, there being no reason to detain them and a ship at Whampoa, aware as his excellency expressed himself, that neither the consul nor his countrymen possessed any opium.)

“This coming before me, the high commissioner, I immediately reply. On a former occasion the said foreigner presented an address, requesting a passport to go to Macao. At that time the reply was given, that as the opium of the several nations was not all given up, it was inconvenient, for the sake of his country's ship, to break up the preventive measures. This is on record. Now the English superintendent Elliot, has sent Johnston to proceed to the Nine Islands and the Macao roads, and there assemble the receiving ships, and deliver up



the whole of the opium. This done—and to examine and receive it will not require much time—then all the soldiers and the guards shall be taken away, and the trade return to its usual channels. The said foreigner ought to remain quiet, and not so often repeat his communications. Wherefore I dispatch this edict to the prefect of Canton, that he may immediately convey the same to the hong merchants, to be by them transmitted to the said consul Van Basel, for his implicit obedience.”

Having received the above, I immediately convey the same to the hong merchants, to be by them transmitted to the said consul Van Basel, for his implicit obedience. A special edict.

Taoukwang, 19th year, 2d month, 22d day. (April 5th, 1839.)

On Monday, the 8th, at a meeting of the committee of the General Chamber of Commerce it was resolved, that the functions of the committee should cease till the restoration of the general trade, as will be seen by the following minutes.

No. 21.

Minutes of a meeting of the committee adjourned from the 5th instant, on the bond proposed by the cohong. Present, Messrs. Wetmore, chairman, Fox, deputy chairman, Braine, Thomson, Dinshaw Furdoonjee, Adam, Heerjeebhoy Rustomjee, Bell, and Delano.

It was moved by Mr. Delano, seconded by Mr. H. Rustomjee, and carried unanimously:—

“That, as this Chamber was instituted for purposes of a commercial nature exclusively, it is expedient that the committee do not become involved in any further correspondence, of a political or personal nature, with the local Chinese authorities; nor committed by any promises or engagements to them, which it may become impossible to fulfill.

“That, inasmuch as we are prisoners in our factories, surrounded by an armed force, our trade stopped, and all communication with Whampoa, Macao, and the fleet outside, denied to us, it becomes necessary that the functions of this committee should cease until the restoration of our trade, the liberty of egress from Canton, and of communication with the outer waters, enables the Chamber to serve the community in a legitimate manner.”

It was then moved by Mr. Bell, seconded by Mr. Braine, and carried unanimously:—“That a copy of the foregoing resolutions be communicated to the hong merchants by the chairman.”

Thanks were voted to the chairman by acclamation, and the meeting was dissolved.

Late on Tuesday night, the 9th, a meeting was held at the consoo-house; the prefect of Canton, and the chief magistrates of Nanhai and Pwanyu, with hong merchants, linguists, and a deputed officer from the commissioner, were present, on the part of the Chinese; of foreigners there were present, the Dutch and American consuls, and three or four other gentlemen. 'The meeting broke up at midnight, after a long and tedious discussion about the bond, and 'nothing but the bond.'

On Wednesday, the 10th, their excellencies, the commissioner and governor, left the provincial city for the Bogue, in order to witness in person the delivery of the opium. The hoppo preceded them, having left the city in the morning. On their way down the river, they passed through the fleet of foreign vessels, at this time twenty-four in number. This was a bold move for the commissioner. Highly irritated, as many of the commanders were, they might easily have captured his excellency, with all his retinue. The strongest injunctions, we believe, had been given by the British superintendent to the fleet within and without the Bogue, to keep the peace. It may be remarked here, that during the whole period of detention, everything remained quiet at Whampoa, and fresh provisions were daily furnished to the ships by their compradors. An English lady, wife of one of the commanders, remained on board ship through the whole period of detention.

On Thursday, the 11th, three or four of the highest provincial officers came into the square before the factories, on a tour of inspection. This visit was repeated on several successive occasions, and usually made at night.

On the morning of the 12th, news arrived from Macao of Mr. Johnston's safe arrival there on the evening of the 7th, intending immediately to proceed in the superintendent's cutter, *Louisa*, to the station near the Bogue, where the deliveries were to be made. Rumors also came from outside, of new transactions in the illicit traffic! The following notice was circulated in the evening.

No. 22.

*Public notice to her Britannic majesty's subjects.*

'The undersigned is sensible that her majesty's subjects, being owners of, or having the control over ships or vessels in the opium trade on the coasts of China, who recently transmitted a solemn pledge to the high commissioner not to attempt to introduce opium into this empire, must be most anxious to fulfill their obligations with all speed and fidelity; and therefore he need do no more than request them to

seize the earliest safe opportunity for the recall of those vessels from their actual pursuits. But it is his duty to remind others her majesty's subjects, not bound by such engagements, and every man of common humanity, be he of what nation he may, that the liberties and possibly the lives of the whole foreign community, now shut up at Canton, hang upon their present forbearance. A seizure of opium would immediately afford a pretext for their continued imprisonment, and, it may well be, far worse treatment, and would be used with no inconsiderable effect in justification of the past and actual violences of this government.

(Signed)

CHARLES ELLIOT,

Chief superintendent of the trade of British subjects in China.

On Saturday, the 13th, it was rumored that a communication was received from the commissioner at the Bogue, desiring (or commanding) captain Elliot to order the store-ships to Chuenpee. The station fixed on was off the Chuenpee fort, at the southern extremity of Anson's bay.

This morning, the 13th, coolies made their appearance in several of the factories, with some of the servants and compradors. A few had entered, an hour or two at a time, on preceding days. Rumors were afloat to-day again respecting sales of opium on the coast, to the amount of 100 chests, but doubts were cast upon their authenticity. That some opium was sold outside after the commencement of the imprisonment, however, is true, but by what parties, or to what extent, we cannot tell.

The first authentic information, respecting the delivery of opium, was given by circular, from the office of the British chief superintendent containing the following intelligence.

No. 23.

Canton, 14th April, 1839. Captain Elliot has received letters from Mr. Johnston, dated at Chuenpee on the 12th at 8 P. M. Up to that time, owing to a want of Chinese boats, the ships there, the *Hercules* and *Austen*, had only delivered 650 chests; but it was expected that they would deliver more than double that amount in the course of yesterday; and instructions had been sent at noon of the 12th to the following vessels, the *Jane*, *Mithras*, *Ariel*, *Mermaid*, *Ruparell*, and *Lady Grant*, to proceed forthwith to join the other ships at Chuenpee, and commence delivering. Captain Elliot has also reason to believe, from a communication from the commissioner and the governor, that an increased number of boats will be procured

immediately, so that the deliveries may be expected to proceed rapidly. The mandarins do not seem to impede the operation by troublesome investigation.

The high commissioner has desired that the servants should be restored at once.

(Signed) EDWARD ELMSLIE,

Secretary and treasurer to the superintendents.

We pass by the thousand rumors and reports every day set on foot, with the numerous expedients devised, by one and other, to 'kill time.' On the 15th, about noon, was issued the following notice.

No. 24.

Sealed tenders will be received at this office until noon of the 18th instant, and then to be opened; setting forth the terms on which a first class British clipper vessel, (the chief superintendent reserving to himself the right of determining the vessel falling within such classification,) being perfectly seaworthy, fully manned, armed, and in all respects ready for sea, after one week's notice shall have been given, will be offered for charter on her majesty's service for a certain period of seven months; and for a further indicated rate for every month or part of a month that such vessel shall be employed in the before-mentioned service, beyond the said period of seven months. The projected service not to involve a passage round the cape of Good Hope. The particulars of seaworthiness, equipment, &c., &c., subject to proof by survey to be held by the direction of the chief superintendent.

(Signed) EDWARD ELMSLIE,

Secretary and treasurer to the superintendents.

On Wednesday, the 17th, additional intelligence was communicated from the superintendent's office, by circular as follows.

No. 25.

Captain Elliot has received letters from Mr. Johnston to the 15th instant at 6 P. M., and from these accounts it may be computed that there will have been delivered about 7000 chests to last evening (the 16th). The ships at Chuænpee, when Mr. Johnston wrote, were the Hercules, Austen, Jane, and Ariel. The Mithras, Mermaid, Ruparell, and Lady Grant were, however, expected immediately, and capt. Elliot hopes that, weather permitting, the moiety will be delivered by to-morrow evening. No other intelligence of interest.

(Signed) EDWARD ELMSLIE,

Secretary and treasurer to the superintendents.

It was early known in Canton, that an order from the commissioner was sent up to the local authorities, for the return of servants and compradors. On the 19th, the following was published.

No. 26.

Choo, the Kwangchow foo, Lew, the Nanhæ heën, and Chang, the Pwanyu heën, proclaim this officially to compradors. (Here the name to whom it is addressed is given.) It appears proper that foreigners who come to Canton to trade should employ compradors who obtain their licenses from the magistrate at Macao, whose special business it is to superintend that affair. Now, when the imperial commands were received to annihilate the traffic in opium, the foreigners not being willing to surrender the opium held by them, the high commissioner, conjointly with the governor, ordered that the compradors and others in their employ should for the present scatter and go away from their service. But now, as the foreigners have all in succession surrendered many chests of opium, though not one fourth of the whole quantity has been received, yet the barbarians having all become obedient and submissive, of which evidence is possessed, orders have been received to return their compradors and servants to their service. It is relied upon that the hong merchants select these people, and cause them to be produced at the public offices for strict investigation, besides which passports are granted to them, and annexed to this is a list of those articles which they are permitted to buy for the foreigners. No contraband goods are to be bought, neither is knavery or deceit to be practiced in the management of all the business — not a hair's breadth of incorrectness must there be, or of opposition to the laws. Finally, you must be governed by the old regulations laid down clearly by the Macao magistrate. Do not oppose. A special edict.

Up to this time, all remained quiet in Macao, so far as actual restraint upon the inhabitants of the settlement was concerned. In the early part of his arrival at Canton, the commissioner sent a requisition by the hands of an officer to the governor to deliver up all the opium in Macao, but it had been previously sent on board ship, and the further landing of it at the custom-house prohibited; and a reply was therefore returned to his excellency stating these things. Considerable anxiety was felt by some concerning the movements of the Chinese authorities, and several persons began to lay by a store of provisions; but nothing was done which at all inconvenienced the residents except taking away the chair-bearers, during the whole period of the detention here.

*(To be continued)*





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